

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 212389
ORIGIN SS-25

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NEA: MR. VELIOTES
S/S-O:SESTEINER

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O P 041357Z SEP 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, MILI, PBOR, IS, LE

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON

REF: A) TEL AVIV 6594; B) BEIRUT 4350 (NOTAL);
C) TEL AVIV 6517

1. FOR BEIRUT: YOU MAY NOW CONTACT BOUTROS AS SOON AS
HE RETURNS FROM CAIRO TO INFORM HIM THAT WE HAVE COMPLETED
OUR PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS WITH ISRAELIS BASED UPON
HIS REQUEST TO AMBASSADOR PARKER ON AUGUST 26. AS YOU
INDICATED IN YOUR CONVERSATION WITH BOUTROS ON SEPTEMBER 1,
YOU SHOULD CONFIRM THAT INITIAL ISRAELI REACTIONS WERE
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NON-ENTHUSIASTIC AND SCEPTICAL. IT IS CLEAR FROM ISRAELI
REACTIONS THAT PROPOSED SCHEME DOES NOT REPEAT NOT GO AS
FAR AS ISRAEL WOULD LIKE IN RIDDING AREA SOUTH OF THE
LITANI OF ALL ARMED PALESTINIANS. NEVERTHELESS, AMBASSADOR
LEWIS IN TEL AVIV BELIEVES, AND DEPARTMENT AGREES, THAT
INITIAL ISRAELI REACTIONS INDICATE THAT THEY PREPARED AT
THIS TIME RESERVE FINAL JUDGMENT UNTIL THEY SEE HOW

SITUATION EVOLVES.

2. YOU SHOULD FURTHER INFORM BOUTROS THAT WE WILL CONTINUE OUR ROLE BETWEEN THE LEBANESE AND ISRAELI GOVERNMENTS OF SEEKING TO ASSURE THAT NEITHER PARTY MISUNDER-

STANDS THE ATTITUDE OR INTENTIONS OF THE OTHER. ONCE WE HAVE RECEIVED CONFIRMED INFORMATION ON PROPOSED POSITIONS OF RESIDUAL ARMED PALESTINIANS IN BINT JUBAYL CAZA PROMISED REFTEL B AND ARE CERTAIN THAT BOUTROS HAS PROVIDED RELIABLE INFORMATION ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN (SUCH AS DESTINATION OF PALESTINIANS WHO WILL BE DEPARTING LEBANON) WE WILL AGAIN APPROACH ISRAELIS.

3. YOU SHOULD IMPRESS UPON BOUTROS, IN VIEW OF THE DELICACY OF THE SITUATION AND ISRAELI DOUBTS, THE NEED FOR MAXIMUM ASSURANCE THAT WE ARE REPRESENTING ACCURATELY TO ISRAELIS NATURE OF ARRANGEMENTS BEING WORKED OUT FOR SOUTH LEBANON. IN THE MEANTIME, TELL BOUTROS THAT THE LESS SAID PUBLICLY ABOUT THESE CONSULTATIONS, THE BETTER. (FYI: WE HAVE IN MIND BOUTROS' COMMENT TO PRESS AUGUST 31 THAT HE "AWAITING AMERICAN ASSURANCES" RE ISRAELI ACTIONS IN LIGHT OF PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOUTHERN LEBANON. END FYI.)

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4. YOU SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT DISCUSS WITH BOUTROS POINTS MADE BY WEIZMAN (PARA 2, REFTEL A) REGARDING FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND MARONITES OF SOUTHERN LEBANON OR QUESTION OF "GOOD FENCE."

5. FOR TEL AVIV: ONCE WE ARE ASSURED THAT WE POSSESS ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOUTH LEBANON CEASEFIRE, WE SHALL PROBABLY WANT YOU TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER WITH WEIZMAN. YOU WERE QUITE CORRECT IN INFORMING HIM THAT PURPOSE OF ENTIRE EXERCISE IS TO SEEK TO ASSIST IN ASSURING PEACEFUL AND SECURE BORDER AND ATTAINING AN EXTENSION OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IN THAT REGION, OBJECTIVES WHICH WE BELIEVE THE ISRAELIS SHARE. CHRISTOPHER

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